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"(e) Water cess is levied for the supply of water to lands which have no claim as of right to such water for irrigation, e.g., dry lands, and the principle generally followed in fixing the rates is to fix them mainly with reference to the cost of supplying the water. Water cess is therefore largely a payment for services rendered."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know whether in view of the differential rates that exist, he will examine the question and see whether they are fair, whether they should be modified, or whether they should form part of the Land Revenue reform ? "

THE HON. SRI KALA VENKATA RAO :—" Certainly, Sir."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I am very sorry I could not come in time. I am not at all well and I am afraid I have to absent myself for a good part of the day. I hope hon. Members will excuse me."

[*Note.*—An asterisk (*) at the commencement of a speech indicates revision by the Member.]

II.—ADJOURNMENT MOTION *RE* CUT IN PETROL RATIONS FOR LORRIES AND PUBLIC CARRIERS.

* THE HON. MR. DANIEL THOMAS :—" Mr. President, Sir, I am glad that hon. Mr. Suryanarayana Rao has drawn the attention of the House to the question of petrol rationing and thereby enabled the Government to make a statement on the petrol position. I think it will clear all misapprehensions and misunderstandings on the question. Hon. Members of the House are well aware that so far as the question of petrol is concerned the stocks are held by the Government of India and allocations of quotas are made by the Central Government to the various Provincial Governments on a prescribed basis. The general position for the last two or three years has been that the number of vehicles has been on the increase, whereas the quota of petrol available has been more or less stationary. I think we are all familiar with the food position in the province especially after the Food debate in this House. I may perhaps compare this to the position of a family where bread rationing is more or less stationary and where more and more mouths are coming in for being fed. Here I may be allowed to quote some figures. The quota allotted to the Province of Madras for the quarter ending 31st July 1947 is 41.58 lakhs of gallons and of this 41·58 lakhs of gallons the allocation has been made in the following manner as regards different requirements :—

14·74 lakhs for buses.
12·43 lakhs for lorries.
7·23 lakhs for cars and cycles.
5·13 lakhs for miscellaneous items.
·91 lakhs for taxis.

40·44

The major part of the item classified as ' Miscellaneous items ' is covered by the Civil Supplies Department and also by petrol supplied to agricultural licensees.

" Now, so far as the number of buses and lorries are concerned, the increase in the current year in buses alone is 1,162 and so far as the lorries are concerned there has been an increase of over 1,800. Of these 1,800 lorries, about 823 are ex-military vehicles. I would like to pause here for a moment and make a statement with reference to these ex-military vehicles. These lorries are disposed of by auction by the Military Disposals department of the Central Government and they are purchased by private persons and then sought to be put on the road. I think in this matter, the allotment of ex-military vehicles for the Madras Province has been more than just and I may even say it has been generous. The instructions of the Government of India are that these ex-military vehicles are not entitled to any quota of petrol at all, and they allow only that amount of petrol which will be necessary to take those vehicles from the place of auction to a place within 100 miles of the place of auction. Beyond that the ex-military vehicles have to take care of themselves and get on in some way or other. (Mr. President : ' By means of perpetual motion.') This is the position so far as Madras is concerned. I understand that the Bombay Government are not allowing anything for ex-military vehicles and I believe the same is the position in some other provinces also. In some provinces these ex-military vehicles are not registered at all. So far as this province is concerned, we have allotted petrol on a certain basis to these ex-military vehicles also, but I think the time has come when we shall have to put a stop to any further issue of petrol to any of the new vehicles or vehicles to be purchased hereafter.

" So, the present position in the current year is there has been an increase of 1,162 buses and about 1,800 lorries. Now, with reference to the other item, cars and motor-cycles, I think the allowance has been fairly modest and there is no possibility of cutting down the allotment so far as they are concerned. In regard to the other major item, 5·13 lakhs for miscellaneous, which as I said, covers, civil supplies and agricultural licensees, I think that item has to be treated as an untouchable one and we cannot cut it as it is intended for essential purposes. So far as the question of rationing of petrol is concerned, the tie is between the buses on the one side and lorries on the other side. In this connexion, I may also say and the hon. Members also know very well that the fuel position of the province is very acute, if not critical. There are more than 2,000 charcoal-driven buses in this province. During the last one or two years a fairly large number of gas buses have been converted into petrol buses in order to ease the fuel position. These charcoal buses have been on the road for the last 4 or 5 years and I think they are now in a hardly roadworthy position. Therefore, we have to make provision for the allotment of petrol to these buses as and when they are converted into petrol buses. There is demand for petrol from every

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source. When an economy drive was launched in the month of May of this year by reduction in the allotment of petrol by limiting the services of buses there was a widespread clamour from all over the Province that the position had to be reconsidered and had to be brought to the old level from July onwards. Now the present position is that out of the various allotments which have been made there is now a reserve of 1·28 lakhs with the Provincial Rationing Officer. When the Government looked into the position it found that apart from the difficulties and the lack of adequate supplies of petrol there are also one or two things to be looked into. In the first place whenever we examined the number of lorries plying in a particular area we found from the figures that there was considerable discrepancy. Certain areas with a large number of lorries are allowed less petrol than certain other areas with a smaller number of lorries. I may say in this connexion that Madras and Calicut seem to enjoy a favoured position. Again another point is the lack of petrol to individual lorry owners, and here also there are discrepancies, some people get very little while other people get more than 200 and 300 gallons and so on. So in considering the difficulties about the supply of petrol it will be equitable to work out a certain standard basis on which the petrol should be distributed and on that basis we have worked out these general things, viz., 60 to 90 gallons for lorries for ex-military vehicles for one month and for private lorries 90 to 120 gallons and for public carrier lorries 120 to 150 gallons. I think hon. Members of the House will agree on the equitable basis of this differentiation. As I said, ex-military vehicles as a matter of course are not entitled to any petrol but since these lorries have been purchased and they are on the road and serve the public needs, they are allowed the minimum amount of petrol. So far as private lorries and public lorries are concerned, we have given the public lorries a higher quota because they serve a larger section of the people whereas private lorries serve the business or the avocation of a particular individual. So on this equitable basis, the allocations have now been standardized. This is the basic rate but discretion has been given to the Rationing Officer. If anything above has to be obtained for the individual needs, particularly for fuel, food transport and for other essential purposes, authority has been vested in the Rationing Officer to act according to his discretion. Even on this basis, we find the position is far from satisfactory. On this basis the Regional Transport Officer of this Province has asked for 1·78 lakhs of gallons more, and the Assistant Rationing Officer who deals with the lorries has asked for 1·28 lakhs more on the present allotment, whereas there is only a reserve of 1·14 lakhs with the Provincial Rationing Officer. Even on the present position we are short of nearly two lakhs of gallons and therefore, as I said to reconsider the position is more difficult. The Government are endeavouring and in fact at the end of last year, the Government of Madras wrote to the Central Government asking for increase and on that representation a small, more or less an inappreciable increase was allowed. As I said larger and larger number of vehicles have been coming in the field. Now since the coming into force of the 12-15 p.m.

new Road Transport Boards 120 new permits have been already issued for new buses and new routes and no petrol has been sanctioned for these. For meeting their immediate requirements about 100 miles per day is allowed whereas I understand they can be allowed to run 140 miles per day. All these limitations are there and with the increasing cry for more buses, more routes and more facilities for public travel, I think we are face to face with this big problem and therefore under the present basis, I think nothing more can be done. The present arrangements are based on an equitable distribution both as regards areas and as regards individuals and I think this will work more satisfactorily than in the past. Meanwhile, we intend addressing the Government of India to allow more petrol and I think we have a fairly good case because the food situation is very difficult. In fact we had asked the Food department to address the Central Government in July and the Food department did send a communication. That produced no result but I think if we keep on asking for some more supply we shall in all probability get some response, especially in view of the present critical situation regarding food. On that basis we can persuade the Government of India to allow a larger quota of petrol for the coming quarter up to January.

" I would like to make one other suggestion—that is with regard to the diesel buses which are now coming in the field. No petrol is required for them and therefore I would appeal to the well-to-do individuals who have amassed fairly substantial moneys in the previous years to invest some of their capital on these diesel engine buses which I understand initially costs more but I believe it renders nearly double the service of these ordinary petrol lorries and buses. I think by this the position of the lorry owners will not be as bad and the Government are also trying their very best to persuade the Government of India to allow a larger quota of petrol in the coming quarter."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I know from the Hon. the Minister whether it is not easy to control allotment of petrol to private carriers than to public carriers, when it is used for the purpose for which it is given? "

THE HON. MR. DANIEL THOMAS :—" I do not find much difference between these two things."

SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I know from the Hon. Minister whether any industries have been affected by this cutting down of civilian petrol? "

THE HON. MR. DANIEL THOMAS :—" It may be that they will have to incur more expenditure because they use public carriers over and above private lorries."

* SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I know from the Hon. the Minister whether some of the essential industries, such as the Match Industry and their factories are suffering due to the cutting down of the supply of petrol and they are unable to bring the

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necessary wood from the Malabar forests? Due to this, they are even forced to close down their factories thus affecting the general public, besides the workers in the Industry."

THE HON. MR. DANIEL THOMAS :—" As regards the match factory, they were allowed according to the vehicles they had 125 gallons per vehicle but Government considering the essentiality raised the quota to 150 gallons per month. We also suggested to them to take their quota in the eight months that they were working in a year for the whole year. That is the best that the Government could do."

SRI P. R. K. SARMA :—" May I know, Sir, whether 9,100 gallons of petrol has been reduced to 3,600 gallons and, therefore, the industry is threatened with closing down."

THE HON. MR. DANIEL THOMAS :—" I have already pointed out the discrepancies existing in various areas in the past and I submit also to the industry to engage public lorries and diesel engine buses."

DR. SIR A. LAKSHMANASWAMI MUDALIYAR :—" The present petrol coupons that are issued are in multiples of four which means that eight gallons have to be taken at one and the same time. When a car requires only five gallons, three gallons will be running to waste and it is rather an imposition. I would request the Hon. the Minister to look into this."

THE HON. MR. DANIEL THOMAS :—" I have myself experienced this difficulty and this will be looked into."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" May I ask the Hon. the Minister to examine the case of industries like the one quoted by my friend Mr. Sarma because, Sir, in a notification which the Western India Match Factory published in the paper, they said they would be forced to close down the factory for about 18 days in a month and 2,000 people will be out of work. This is a case which requires the attention of the Government so that the Leader of the House may not have to intervene in the dispute which will arise if the factory is closed down. Government should not be content with mere rationing."

THE HON. MR. DANIEL THOMAS :—" We know that these are days of rationing; yarn is rationed and I am told weavers are only employed for seven days in a whole month. We should supply for civilian purposes also and cannot therefore give more to these factories."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" I think Government will always look into the matter and if they can do anything, they will certainly try to help such industries. There can be no doubt about it."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" For example, the Minister for Transport is interested in housing schemes. The brick-layers are finding it impossible to transport bricks in lorries."

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MR. PRESIDENT :—" They can transport by bullock carts."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" Bullock carts are not so easily available."

MR. PRESIDENT :—" Are you pressing your motion?"

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" I wanted to elicit information so that people might make representations later on."

The motion was not pressed.

III.—DEMANDS FOR GRANTS FOR FURTHER EXPENDITURE IN THE YEAR 1947–48.

* SRI B. NARAYANASWAMI NAYUDU :—" I would refer to the capital outlay on electricity schemes. In page 29 of the Demands for Grants for further Expenditure and Detailed Supplementary Estimates thereof for the year 1947–48, it is stated as follows :—

'Item (iii) (a) The Government have sanctioned an estimate for Rs. 39·8 lakhs, rising to Rs. 41 lakhs in eight years for the construction of additional lines and sub-stations in the Mettur Hydro-Electric System to improve the present supply conditions and to serve new special loads anticipated in the Trichinopoly-Dalmianagar areas. This is a post-war development scheme. As the existing 66,000 volts double circuit line between Erode and Trichinopoly is overloaded, a third circuit for operation at 110,000 volts is to be constructed, etc.. etc. With these extensions, it will be possible to meet the anticipated further demands for power of the South Indian Railway, the cement factory and the electric licensee in Trichinopoly area.'

" I would like to know why this expansion should not be for the benefit of agriculture and specially for irrigation. That is the point. There is the question of priority for food. Then why should these South Indian Railway and the Cement Factory alone get priority?

" Then I would refer to item (*b*) of the above where the Government have also sanctioned an estimate for Rs. 24 lakhs initially, rising to Rs. 29·5 lakhs within eight years, for a 66/110 K.V. extension scheme in Salem district, Mettur Hydro-Electric System."

12-30 p.m. " It has been stated that the scheme will meet the agricultural industrial and rural development loads of the areas. My point is that it may be that after all only about two per cent of the load will be made available to agriculture; so I wish to know what percentage will be available for each item. The method of putting things in such a way ought to be avoided and it must be definitely stated what proportion you are going to allot for each purpose. The next point I would ask is whether you should not delete industrial purposes altogether and the whole thing allowed for agriculture only.

" Coming to items (iv) and (v) on page 29 of the printed memorandum, it is seen that about 44 lakhs of rupees are involved. Even here the Government have stated that ' the scheme is intended to meet the large demand for power that has arisen in the Tenkasi, Rajapalayam and Tirumangalam areas, especially for agricultural and industrial requirements '. You will ultimately find that the